

ELIZABETH L. PENDLAY

Attorney at Law

106 North Main Street - P.O. Box 289

Crosby, North Dakota 58730-0289

Tel: 701-965-6036 | Fax: 701-965-6428 | Mobile: 701-339-7742

E-mail: liz@crosbylaw.net

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Mr. Frank Luke
P.O. Box 618
Crosby, ND 58730

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Mr. Frank Luke

Dear Sirs or Madams:

It is my pleasure to recommend Frank Luke for any prospective teaching position for which he may make application.

My name is Elizabeth L. Pendlay, and I have come to know Mr. Luke in his capacity as my eldest daughter's seventh grade math instructor at Divide County High School, located in Crosby, North Dakota. I have attended and observed Mr. Luke's math classes on several occasions, and I am familiar with the daily assignments and instruction my daughter receives from Mr. Luke. Based upon my observations of Mr. Luke's classroom teaching and the extraordinary education he provides to my daughter on a daily basis, I feel confident that I can attest to the fact that Mr. Luke is among the most talented, knowledgeable, committed, and enthusiastic instructors I have had the pleasure of meeting. This is not a compliment or observation I dole out lightly; being an attorney and having enjoyed the rigors of a challenging and lengthy education myself, and now having three school-aged children of my own, I have, over the course of several decades, met many competent instructors, more than a few incompetent ones, and, more rarely, exceptionally capable, diligent, and dedicated teachers. Mr. Luke falls into the latter category of instructors I have met and come to know; he is a rare and genuinely talented instructor, not merely a competent one.

In observing Mr. Luke's classes, several things became immediately evident to me. First, Mr. Luke is very well-acquainted with the subject matter he teaches; Mr. Luke is able to effectively communicate new and confusing information to his students in a fashion that makes the information readily consumable and clear. Mr. Luke has the unique ability to explain difficult concepts in multiple ways and means, making it easier for his students, all of whom likely learn differently from one another, to take in the lessons and apply them successfully. Mr. Luke has the ability to teach to any student because his intellectual command of the substantive subject matter, coupled with his teaching style, successfully speaks to a variety of learning styles and preferences that always vary and exist from class to class and student to student.

Next, Mr. Luke is sincerely committed to the betterment and success of each and every one of his students. I have known nearly every student in my eldest daughter's class from first grade to present. They all have different strengths and weaknesses, triumphs and setbacks. Mr. Luke clearly is aware of this fact as well; in watching him teach and conduct his classroom, I noticed Mr. Luke used *all* available classroom resources to support and encourage the students who struggled and to challenge those who excelled. I also noticed all of his students, no matter on what end of learning spectrum they rested, were equally eager and committed to their own learning. One example of Mr. Luke's methods of teaching to all of his students which I found to be particularly useful was Mr. Luke's implementation student teaching at times. He asks students who have grasped the subject matter to prepare a lesson, present it, and then assist the rest of the students in learning and applying the concepts presented. My daughter, Elyse, has had occasion to teach several times in his class. I believe this learning experience has been a driving force in her desire to succeed and excel in his class. Elyse enjoys the additional work and time spent at home preparing problems, handouts, and other presentation materials, rather than begrudging these things as I have sometimes seen with more "traditional" homework. This exercise requires Elyse to thoroughly learn, review, and create new material herself; she has come to understand one cannot teach a subject if she does not know it well herself. Elyse has also become a resource for her peers, helping them to learn concepts Mr. Luke's teaching style has helped her to master. In this respect, Mr. Luke has appropriately developed and encouraged peer support and assistance among the students in his class. He encourages the students who "get it" to assist and teach those who struggle. This interaction reinforces the information in the students who have learned the material and provides another level of support and assistance, inside and outside of the classroom, to those students who need more help. The success of this learning tool has yielded excellent results and grades in my own daughter, and I am aware that she is happy to assist her peers in learning, too, helping the entire class to better themselves.

Additionally, I was impressed with the manner in which Mr. Luke conducts his classroom. He is professional in his own manner of dress, presentation, and speech. He is organized and prepared for his classes. He makes himself available to his students. Mr. Luke is clear about his expectations of his students, to include classroom structure, etiquette, and rules, and he enforces those expectations when necessary. All the while, he is enthusiastic, encouraging, personable, and even humorous in teaching the material. He holds the attention of his students, and he brings out the best in them. Mr. Luke's students enjoy the time they spent with him and do so in way that teaches them to act respectfully and responsibly in that setting. He doesn't just teach math – Mr. Luke teaches his students to respect themselves, their peers, their instructors, and the value of taking ownership of their actions and educations. In my mind, these practical lessons are equally important to the intellectual and substantive material learned by the students, especially as they enter young adulthood.

Finally, in meeting with Mr. Luke to discuss my own child's progress, I can confirm his ability to communicate with parents is just as strong and honest as his ability to communicate with his students. Mr. Luke was frank about areas in which Elyse needed improvement. He was equally honest and thorough in discussing the areas in which she excelled. I appreciated that he also set a high bar for my daughter; she has always been a "top" student, driven and willing to learn. Not always, however, have her teachers required her to push herself. At one of the conferences, Mr. Luke explained that Elyse had an "A" and was doing well, certainly by overall class standards. That said, he willingly and candidly explained she could do more, learn more, work harder. That fact that Mr. Luke does not simply measure individual student success by a pat on the back for a high letter grade made an impression on me; he pointed out that doing well did not mean she need not do better. I appreciated that Mr. Luke was willing to provide her greater educational challenges because he saw

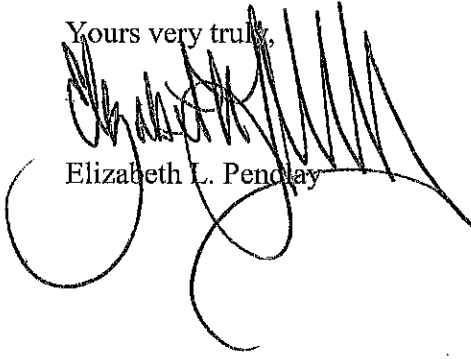
she was capable of greater success and learning. I sincerely appreciated his individualized view of Elyse's learning abilities and his willingness to help me encourage Elyse to learn above and beyond merely what is required to earn a high letter grade. Mr. Luke truly seeks to assist his students in learning to the best of their own individual abilities and beyond – not just to the highest letter grade that can be passed out. I find this philosophy to be a very commendable one in teaching.

For all of the reasons stated above, I am pleased to recommend Frank Luke for any teaching position for which he may make application. It is frustrating as a parent to lose such an asset to my child's education, but it is heartening to know Mr. Luke will continue to pursue further work in the realm of teaching and benefit other students elsewhere.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly for additional questions or inquires that you may have regarding Mr. Luke.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this candidate and can assure you that he would be an asset to your educational institution.

Yours very truly,



Elizabeth L. Penclay